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NEWS RELEASE

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Corrections, Human Services Offer Treatment To Get Inmates Off Drugs, Alcohol

More than 90 percent of Utah's 5,400 prison inmates admit they're hooked on drugs or alcohol. At least 526 receive some treatment, including 216 men and women in inpatient treatment programs. Another 150 inmates are on waiting lists.

Corrections and Human Services officials formed a partnership to provide the treatment inmates need to get off drugs and alcohol. Working together makes limited treatment dollars go further. The partnership includes \$780,000 yearly for treatment from Human Services' Division of Substance Abuse. Providing additional substance abuse treatment is among the milestones both departments have which are included in Gov. Leavitt's 1,000-day plan.

"It's vital to provide treatment for inmates," Substance Abuse Director Patrick Fleming said. "If we don't get them off drugs and alcohol while they're in prison, they'll re-offend when they get out to pay for their habits."

Corrections studies show that 85 percent of men and 93 percent of women have substance abuse problems. Overall, 49 percent of inmates return to prison within the first year of being released and 68 percent are back within three years. But only 8 percent of inmates who complete the extensive treatment programs go back the first year and about 25 percent return within three years.

Corrections received a \$1-million re-entry grant from the Department of Justice on Day 193 of its 1,000-day plan. Human Services received a similar \$1-million grant in Youth Corrections on Day 169. Adult Corrections will use their funds to provide additional treatment for 100 offenders who will return to the community after they graduate from drug and alcohol treatment classes. In addition to traditional treatment, Corrections is working with a number of agencies to help inmates with things like child custody, child care, bus passes, clothing and other needs, said Corrections Programming Director Belle Brough.

Ninety-six percent of female inmates are mothers. Of those, 74 percent have children living with family members and 22 percent have kids in state custody, according to an inmate study Substance Abuse conducted last year.

"Treatment saves taxpayer's money too," Fleming said. "Every \$1 dollar spent on treatment saves \$7 in the criminal justice system."